

Congressman Childers Urges Swift Action by USDA, Governors' Office in Providing Disaster Relief to North Mississippi Farmers

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Washington, DC – Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) today urged both the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Mississippi to act swiftly in gathering information necessary to provide farmers with much-needed disaster relief. In letters to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack and Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour, Congressman Childers stated the urgency and importance of designating counties in Mississippi as agricultural disaster areas in order to make assistance available as quickly as possible.

“Towns in North Mississippi are experiencing severe economic repercussions as farmers are unable to harvest their crops. My office has received numerous phone calls from producers across the region, including sweet potato farmers, who are facing extreme crop loss from flooding. In many instances, producers have been able to harvest only 20 to 25 percent of their crop.

“It’s essential that we provide immediate relief to our farmers, who are still working diligently to harvest as much of their crops as possible. The sooner hard-hit areas receive disaster assistance, the more quickly both farmers and local communities will be able to recover. I hope that Secretary Vilsack and Governor Barbour will help in this effort.”

Over the past several weeks, Mississippi has received unprecedented amounts of rainfall, which have shown no sign of stopping. These heavy rainfalls have created flooding, making it nearly impossible for producers in North Mississippi to harvest their crops.

In order to provide assistance to affected farmers, the Mississippi State Emergency Board must

gather the appropriate crop loss numbers and report which counties in Mississippi will qualify for disaster designations. This process should be completed by the end of October, at which time it will be incumbent upon both the federal government and state offices to make sure the designated areas receive assistance as quickly as possible. Specifically, farmers will be in need of emergency farm loans, Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) assistance, and crop insurance claim processing.

*A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit [w
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